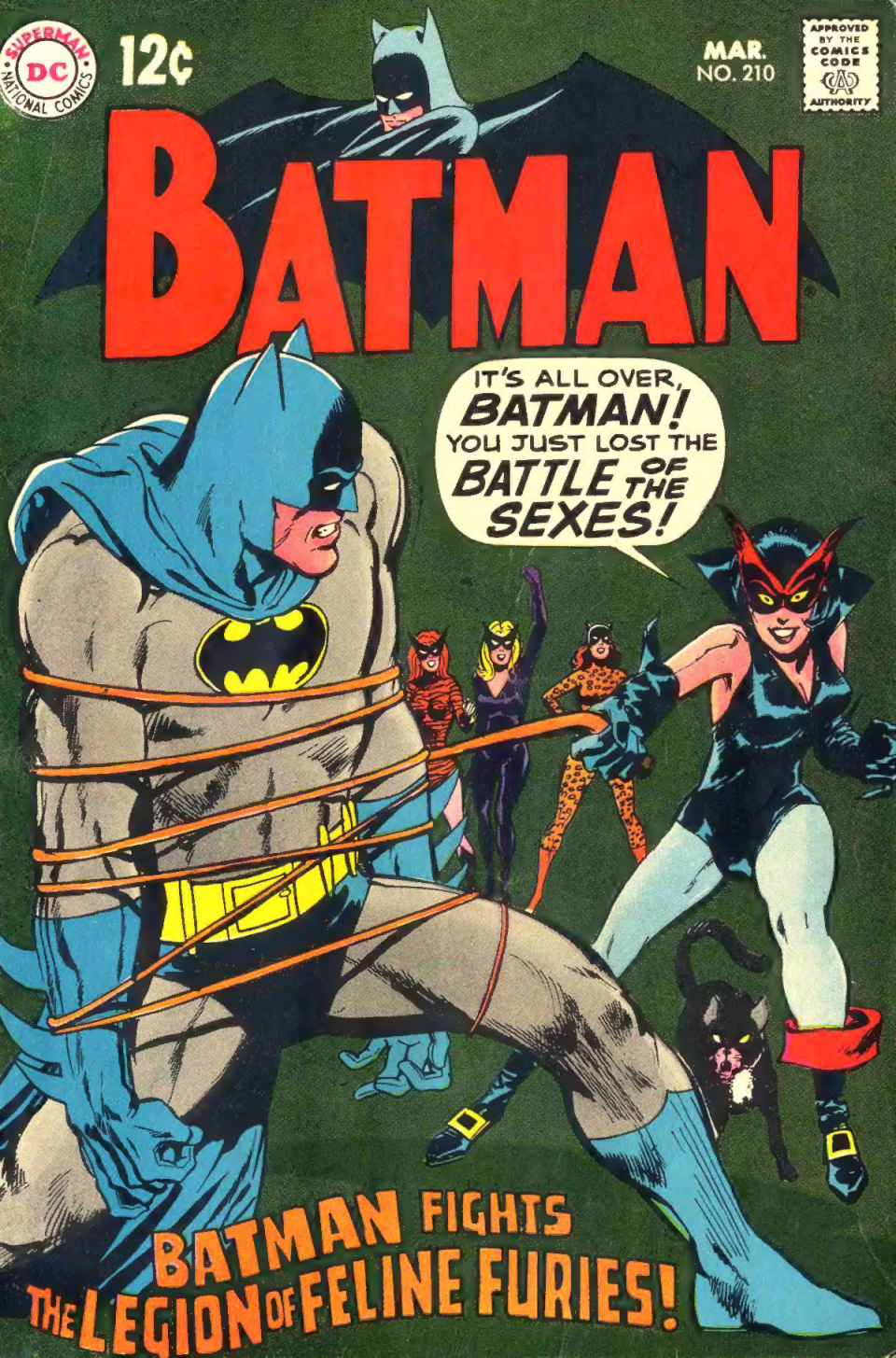
SUPERMAN • DC • NATIONAL COMICS
12¢
MAR.
NO. 210
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
BATMAN
IT'S ALL OVER, BATMAN! YOU JUST LOST THE BATTLE OF THE SEXES!
BATMAN FIGHTS THE LEGION OF FELINE FURIES!

Enter the Revell Invisible Sweepstakes. Win a trip around the world on TWA! 3 weeks! For 3 people!

Or win a Concord Video Tape Recorder System or a Honda 90 or 1 of 26,000 valuable Revell prizes!

It may be up, up and away for you and two companions next summer on the dream trip of all dream trips. TWA will jet your trio to Hawaii, Tokyo, Hong Kong, New Delhi, Athens, Rome, Paris, London, New York and Los Angeles. Air fare, hotel and tour expenses paid for three weeks, plus $100 shopping-spree money.

Or you can win one of three Concord home TV studios, complete with video tape recorder, TV camera, microphone and TV monitor. Or one of three Honda 90's, the cycle that can go 58 mph and deliver 170 mpg. Or one of 100 Revell authentic "Apollo" Lunar Spacecraft Kits...or one of 100 thrilling Home Race Sets ...or one of 800 favorite Revell 6-pack kits.

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25,000 INSTANT WINNERS!

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Revell

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BATMAN

With ROBIN THE BOY WONDER

DEVILISH DILEMMA ARISES WHEN A NEW BREED OF HELL-CAT SPAWNED BY THAT ARCH-FELINE FELON *CATWOMAN* PIERCES THE STILLY NIGHT WITH *CAT*-ATONIC *CAT*-ERWAULING, AS HER *FELINE FURIES* JOIN IN THE "BATTLE OF THE SEXES" TO OUTWIT AND BEFUDDLE THE *CAPED CRUSADER* IN ...

"The Case of the PURR-LOINED Pearl!"

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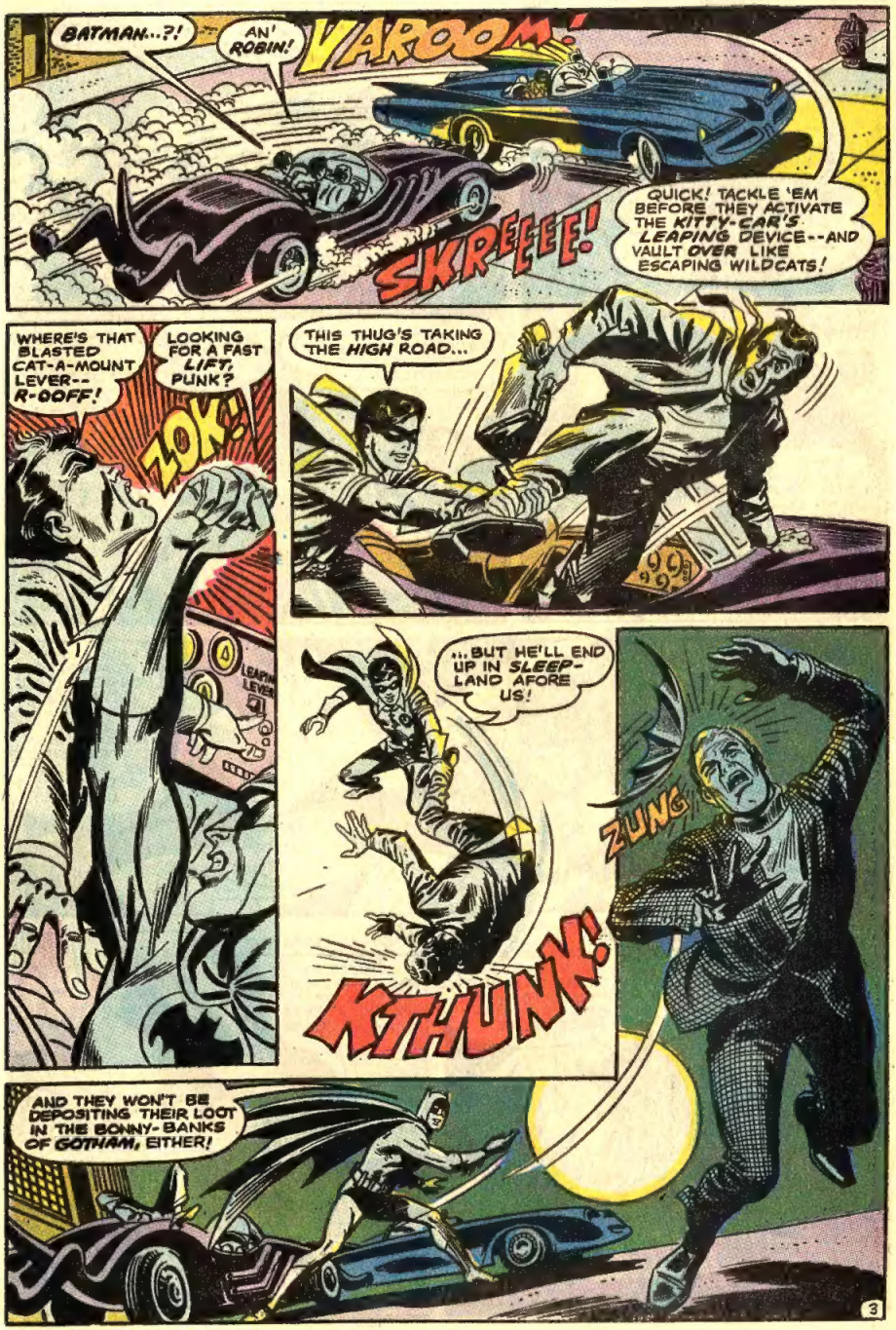
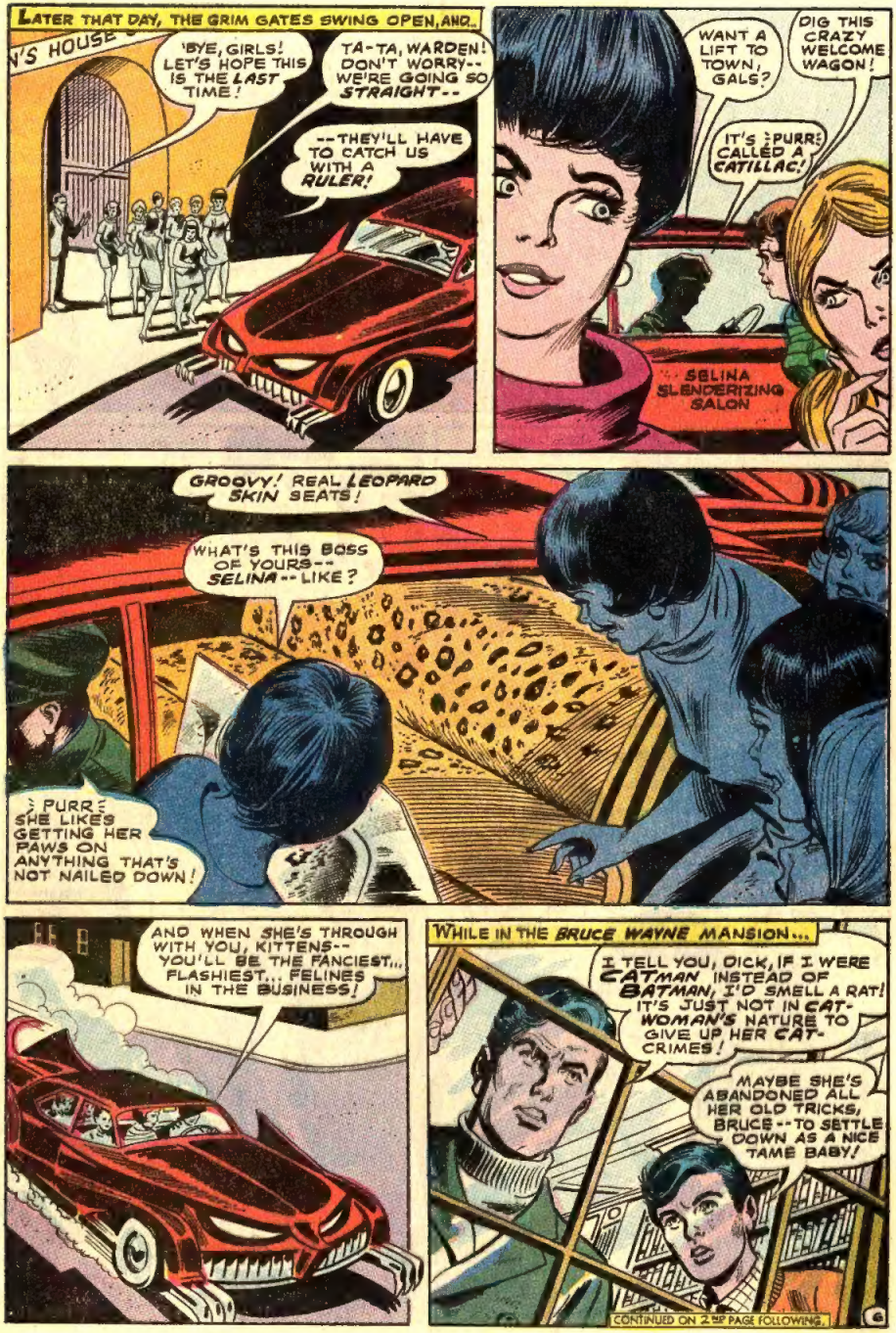
NIGHT--THE BATMOBILE SLOWLY CRUISES ON PATROL IN GOTHAM CITY...
BATMAN, IF I DIDN'T KNOW BETTER I'D THINK YOU HAD A THING GOING FOR CATWOMAN!
SELINA Slenderizing Salon
LISTEN, ROBIN...SELINA KYLE'S BEEN OUT OF JAIL OVER A MONTH--
THIS IS THE TENTH NIGHT IN A ROW WE'VE CASED HER NEW "FRONT" ENTERPRISE...
--AND SHE HASN'T MADE ONE FELINE MOVE TO COMMIT A CAT-MOTIVE CRIME AS--CATWOMAN! INSTEAD, SHE OPENS A "SLENDERIZING SALON"--WITH NO VISIBLE BUSINESS AS YET!
I TELL YOU--AS A CAT SMELLS CATNIP--I SMELL A "FRONT"!
THAT'S WHY WE'VE ALSO BEEN CASING EVERY POSSIBLE CAT-TARGET IN TOWN THAT MIGHT LURE HER TO STRIKE! THE KITTY-KAT KLUB--
KITTY-KAT
KITTY-KAT KLUB
THE CATTLE CLUB STEAK HOUSE--THE COUGAR MOTOR SALES COMPANY...
AND, AS THEY ROUND A CORNER...
PSYCATELIC CIRCUS
LOOK, ROBIN--IN FRONT OF THE PSYCATELIC CIRCUS--CATWOMAN'S KITTY-CAR! WITH THE MOTOR RUNNING...
SUDDENLY, BURSTING OUT OF THE POPULAR "IN" SPOT...
GOT THE GATE RECEIPTS! NOW FOR A FAST, FELINE FADE-OUT! WITH A TIGER IN OUR TANK!
MUST BE CATWOMAN'S BOYS ALL RIGHT! HOLD TIGHT, ROBIN--WE'RE GOING TO CUT THEM OFF!
RATATAT
CIRCUS
POW! POW!
2


BATMAN...?!
AN' ROBIN!
VAROOM!
SKREEEE!
QUICK! TACKLE 'EM BEFORE THEY ACTIVATE THE KITTY-CAR'S LEAPING DEVICE--AND VAULT OVER LIKE ESCAPING WILDCATS!
WHERE'S THAT BLASTED CAT-A-MOUNT LEVER--R-OOFF!
LOOKING FOR A FAST LIFT, PUNK?
ZOK!
THIS THUG'S TAKING THE HIGH ROAD...
...BUT HE'LL END UP IN SLEEP-LAND AFORE US!
KTHUNK!
ZUNG
AND THEY WON'T BE DEPOSITING THEIR LOOT IN THE BONNY-BANKS OF GOTHAM, EITHER!
3

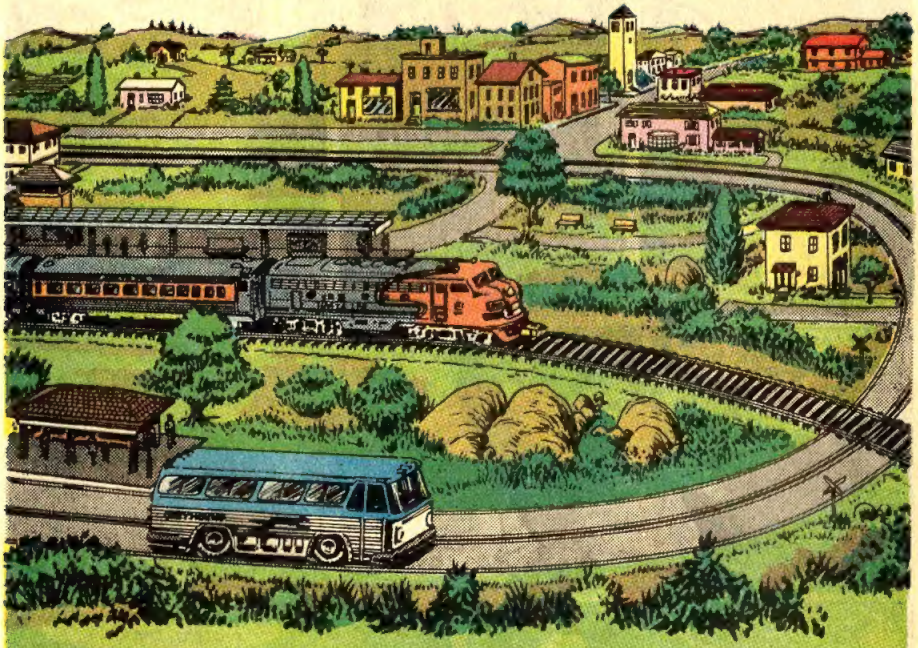
OKAY, TOMCAT! TAKE US TO YOUR LEADER--CATWOMAN!
CAT...WHAT? YOU MUST BE ROCKY, BATMAN! WE'RE AN INDEPENDENT ENTERPRISE!
YE-AH...? THEN HOW COME YOU'RE USING HER KITTY-CAR?
WE BOUGHT IT LEGIT--FROM LAFFIN' LOUIE'S USED CAR LOT!
SEE--HERE'S OUR RECEIPT!
BATMAN--HE'S TELLING IT LIKE IT IS! IS IT POSSIBLE...
...THAT CATWOMAN'S LIQUIDATING ALL HER CAT-CRIME CONTRAPTIONS? CLOSING UP SHOP--GOING STRAIGHT?
IS IT POSSIBLE? AT THIS MOMENT, BEHIND THE CLOSED DOORS OF THE SELINA SLENDER-IZING SALON...
LICK AWAY, SLINKY, PET... YOU'RE SEALING BATMAN'S FATE! THESE EIGHT INTRODUCTORY LETTERS SHOULD BE JUST THE "CREAM" I NEED...
...TO LURE THE FAT CATS NECESSARY TO START CATWOMAN'S NEW ENTERPRISE OFF TO A PURR-FECT CRIME!
AND, MOMENTS LATER...
BY THIS TIME TOMORROW, A LITTER OF FELINE FURIES WILL BE BORN!
AND CATWOMAN WILL TRULY HAVE PURR: NINE LIVES!
U.S. MAIL
4

THE NEXT DAY...AT A FOREBODING EDIFICE OUTSIDE GOTHAM CITY...
HA! HA! MALE CALL, GIRLS...COME AN' GET IT!
WOMEN'S HOUSE OF DETENTION
INSIDE...EIGHT OF THE INMATES RECEIVE IDENTICAL LETTERS...
REMEMBER, YOU'RE ONLY SEATED TOGETHER AND GETTIN' THIS V.I.P. SERVICE 'CAUSE...
...WE'RE COPPIN' OUT OF THIS HEN-COOP TODAY!
STRICTLY ON THE UP-AND-UP--WITH A PAROLE!
HEE... HEE! SOME OUTSIDE JOKER'S GOT SOME SENSAHUMOR--SENDING THIS JUNK MAIL TO ME HERE!
"SELINA SLENDERIZING SALON, GOTHAM CITY.
"YOU HAVE BEEN SELECTED OUT OF THOUSANDS TO ENJOY THE BEAUTIFYING BENEFITS OF OUR CRASH-COURSE IN SLENDERIZING... SVELTIFYING... AND STUPEFYING! YOU MAY HAVE BEEN A 'LOSER' UP TO NOW, BUT NOW YOU CAN BE A 'WINNER'! FREE!"
4097
ONE THING LIGHT LAURA DIGS--THAT WORD, FREE!
"SLENDERIZING"! FLORID FLO NEVER COULD LOOK A GIFT-HORSE IN THE MOUTH! I ALWAYS ATE IT!
"SVELTIFYING"! BIG BARBARA'S BEEN CALLED EVERYTHING--BUT NOT SVELTE!
SULTRY SARAH USED TO SLAY THE SUCKERS--BUT I NEVER STUPEFIED ONE!
LOSERS WE'VE BEEN--BUT TIMID TRIXIE CAN'T AFFORD A THIRD-TIME LOSS!
4907
607


LATER THAT DAY, THE GRIM GATES SWING OPEN, AND...
'S HOUSE
'BYE, GIRLS! LET'S HOPE THIS IS THE LAST TIME!
TA-TA, WARDEN! DON'T WORRY--WE'RE GOING SO STRAIGHT--
--THEY'LL HAVE TO CATCH US WITH A RULER!
WANT A LIFT TO TOWN, GALS?
DIG THIS CRAZY WELCOME WAGON!
IT'S PURR: CALLED A CATILLAC!
SELINA SLENDERIZING SALON
GROOVY! REAL LEOPARD SKIN SEATS!
WHAT'S THIS BOSS OF YOURS--SELINA--LIKE?
PURR: SHE LIKES GETTING HER PAWS ON ANYTHING THAT'S NOT NAILED DOWN!
AND WHEN SHE'S THROUGH WITH YOU, KITTENS--YOU'LL BE THE FANCIEST... FLASHIEST... FELINES IN THE BUSINESS!
WHILE IN THE BRUCE WAYNE MANSION...
I TELL YOU, DICK, IF I WERE CATMAN INSTEAD OF BATMAN, I'D SMELL A RAT! IT'S JUST NOT IN CATWOMAN'S NATURE TO GIVE UP HER CAT-CRIMES!
MAYBE SHE'S ABANDONED ALL HER OLD TRICKS, BRUCE--TO SETTLE DOWN AS A NICE TAME BABY!
CONTINUED ON 2ND PAGE FOLLOWING
6

Add a Greyhound bus route to your Postage Stamp Train layout.

Then put up a few houses along the way.



Aurora's micro-gauge line has got to be the biggest little railroad in the world, and getting bigger all the time. Sixteen complete sets; 28 different locos and cars; all kinds of track, switches, and relays; and dozens of buildings, bridges, and tunnels. Now a complete bus system. If you're not yet hooked on mini-railroading, this should drive you to it.

Postage Stamp Trains—model railroading to the Nth degree.

POSTAGE STAMP

AURORA

BUS SYSTEM

©1969 AURORA PLASTICS CORP., WEST HEMPSTEAD, NEW YORK

The World's Largest Manufacturer of Hobby Products

I'LL BELIEVE THAT--WHEN LEOPARDS LOSE THEIR SPOTS--AND REAL TIGERS GO IN FOR RUNNING GAS STATIONS!
UH-UH! SHE'S LYING LOW, SILENTLY STALKING--WAITING TO POUNCE! HER PREY--REAL BIG GAME!
WHAT IS IT, ALFRED?
APPEARS TO BE OFFICIAL CITY BUSINESS, MASTER BRUCE, SIR! HAND-DELIVERED BY ONE OF COMMISSIONER GORDON'S MEN...
"OFFICE OF THE MAYOR OF GOTHAM CITY. DEAR BRUCE, IT WOULD PLEASE ME TO HAVE YOU, AS ONE OF OUR LEADING CITIZENS, IN ATTENDANCE AT THE RECEPTION GOTHAM IS GIVING FOR THE ARRIVAL OF HIS HONOR--THE NIZAM OF NEPAL--ON A VISIT OF STATE. CORDIALLY, JOHN V.L."
HMMM, ARRIVING IN NINE DAYS! COULD THIS BE THE BIG EVENT CATWOMAN IS WAITING FOR?
ISN'T THE NIZAM THE POTENTATE WHO POSSESSES THE POTALA PEARL--THE MOST FANTABULOUS HUNK OF NATURAL NACRE IN THE ORIENT?
THE SAME! IT NEVER LEAVES THE TURBAN HE WEARS, EVEN TO BED!
BUT WHY SHOULD IT ATTRACT OUR FELINE FELON? SHE NEVER GOES FOR ANYTH!VG UNLESS IT HAS A CAT-MOTIF!
"NIZAM OF NEPAL"--"POTALA PEARL"--WHERE'S THE CAT TIE-IN--?
RIGHT UNDER OUR VERY NOSES, DICK!
GOT TO PUT THROUGH A CALL TO COMMISSIONER GORDON!
7

BRUCE WAYNE HERE, COMMISSIONER! WHAT SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS HAVE YOU MADE FOR THE NIZAM'S STAY IN GOTHAM?
THE PICK OF GOTHAM'S FINEST GUARDING THE PRESIDENTIAL SUITE AT THE GOTHAM HILTON, BRUCE! WHY?
CATWOMAN'S GOT HER CLAWS OUT FOR THE NIZAM'S PEARL!
NOW--IF I WERE TO EXTEND THE HOSPITALITY OF WAYNE MANSION TO HIS HIGH POTENTATESHIP--
YES--THAT WOULD HAVE MORE PRESTIGE THAN THE HOTEL, AND BE EASIER TO PATROL!
ESPECIALLY IF YOU BRING IN BATMAN AND ROBIN ON THE CASE!
MOMENTS LATER, AFTER THE HOT-LINE PHONE RINGS...
WE'LL BE THERE WITH BELLS ON, COMMISSIONER--TO BELL THE CAT!
I CAN'T STAND THE SUSPENSE ANY LONGER! WHAT'S THE CAT-CLUE... WHAT?
WHAT DEVIOUS DEDUCTION HAS BRUCE USED TO DIG OUT A FRAIL FELINE FLAW IN THE FEEBLE TRAIL GIVEN TO HIM? CAN YOU GUESS BEFORE THIS ONE PAGE PAUSE (PAWS) IS OVER?
8

CRAZY HORSE

Build him yourself! This '69 Mustang model kit is rarin' to go. The 428" Cobra Jet Engine would unleash 335 horses... if it were real! Revell's new model of the '69 Mustang takes only a few fascinating hours to build. And you can build him a variety of ways. Build him convertible or build him hard top. Build him stock or build him street modified (he has optional things like racing slicks and mag wheels). Build him Drag and hold on! He's less than $2.00, wherever toys or hobbies are sold.

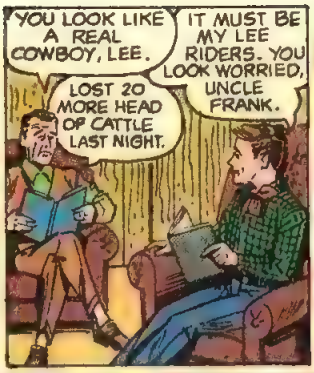
Send 35¢ for new 1969 color catalog of Revell kits. Revell, Inc., 4391 Glencoe Avenue, Venice, California 90291.

Revell

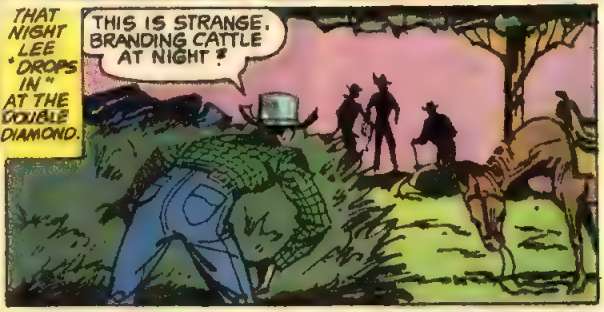
January Model of the Month
1969 Ford Mustang

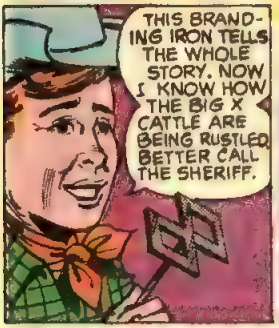
Lee Rider in The Brand Rustlers

LEE RIDER VISITS HIS UNCLE FRANK'S BIG X RANCH.

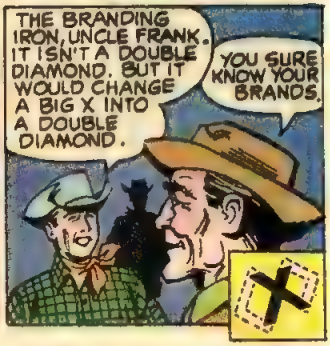


THAT NIGHT LEE "DROPS IN" AT THE DOUBLE DIAMOND.

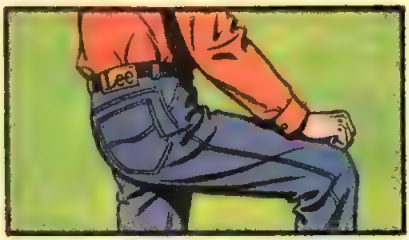




LATER.


THE BRANDING IRON, UNCLE FRANK. IT ISN'T A DOUBLE DIAMOND. BUT IT WOULD CHANGE A BIG X INTO A DOUBLE DIAMOND.
YOU SURE KNOW YOUR BRANDS.

BOYS! WEAR THE WESTERN PANTS THAT REAL COWBOYS WEAR - LEE RIDERS. THEY'RE TOUGH! THEY'RE CUT RIGHT! THEY HAVE THE GENUINE LEE BRAND ON EVERY PAIR.



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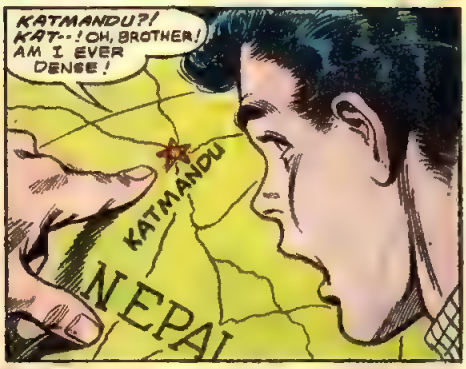
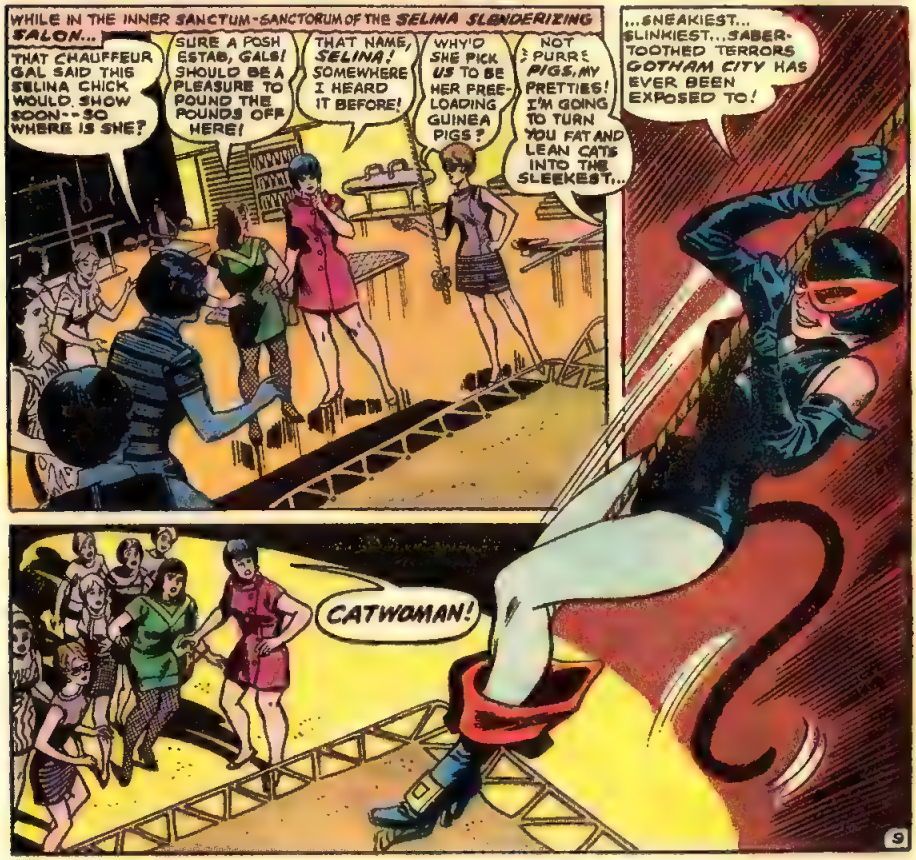
"The Case of the PURR-LOINED Pearl!" PART 2




WHILE IN THE INNER SANCTUM-SANCTORUM OF THE SELINA SLENDERIZING SALON...
THAT CHAUFFEUR GAL SAID THIS SELINA CHICK WOULD SHOW SOON--SO WHERE IS SHE?
SURE A POSH ESTAB, GALS! SHOULD BE A PLEASURE TO POUND THE POUNDS OFF HERE!
THAT NAME, SELINA! SOMEWHERE I HEARD IT BEFORE!
WHY'D SHE PICK US TO BE HER FREE-LOADING GUINEA PIGS?
NOT PURR PIGS, MY PRETTIES! I'M GOING TO TURN YOU FAT AND LEAN CATS INTO THE SLEEKEST...
...SNEAKIEST... SLINKIEST...SABER-TOOTHED TERRORS GOTHAM CITY HAS EVER BEEN EXPOSED TO!
CATWOMAN!

IN PURR-SON! OTHERWISE KNOWN AS SELINA KYLE-- YOUR HOSTESS!
KNEW I KNEW THAT TAG! GOOD OL' NUMBER 102860-- THE PRISON PET NO ONE EVER SAW!
RIGHT, BIG BARBARA! FROM MY ELITE SPOT IN "SOLITARY" I HAD AMPLE TIME TO VIEW ALL OF YOU WITHOUT BEING SEEN...
AND CAREFULLY SELECT EXACTLY THE EIGHT WITH THE REQUIRED TALENTS I NEEDED TO CAT-ALYZE MY NEW CAT-CREW -- THE FELINE FURIES!
WE ALL HAVE A COMMON CAUSE-- A COMMON ENEMY...
MEN! IT WAS MEN WHO LED US ASTRAY--MEN WHO PUT US BEHIND BARS LIKE CAGED TIGERS!
NOW I GIVE YOU A CHANCE TO STRIKE BACK-- WITH BARED FANGS AND CLAWED PAWS!
I'LL PUT YOU IN FIGHTING TRIM, TEACH YOU ALL MY TRICKS!
TOGETHER WE SHALL BE AS ONE CAT WOMAN-- WITH NINE LIVES! YOU THE BODY-- I THE HEAD! WHAT'S YOUR ANSWER?
I DON'T KNOW! SOME MEN I JUST DIG THE MOST!
AW, SHE'S JUST AN EX-CON, LIKE US! WHAT CAN SHE TEACH US WE DON'T ALREADY KNOW?
YE-AH! I LIKE T'SEE HER THROW ME FOR A LOSS!

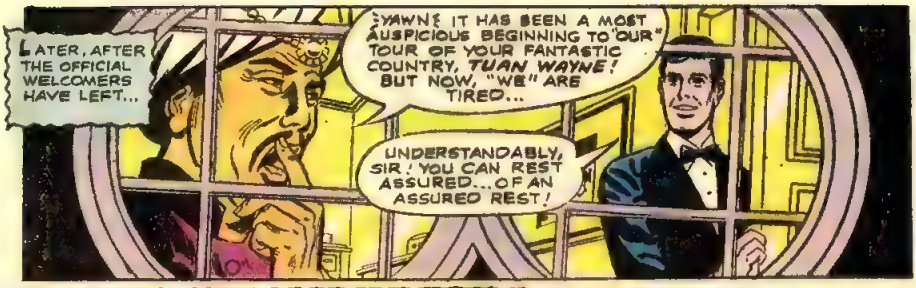
C'MON, PUSSY-CAT! LEARN ME SOMETHIN'!
SOON } PURR { YOU'LL LEARN WHY YOU NEED ME AS YOUR BRAIN!
IF YOU HAVE ANY BRAINS LEFT, AFTER...
} PURR { AFTER YOU CATCH ME-- IF EVER!
ZOOM!
CHOMP!
KATCHUNK!
NOW CATCH THIS, BIG MOUTH BARBARA!

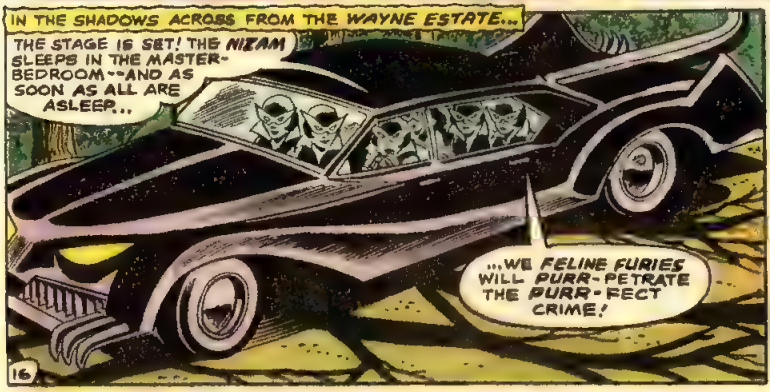
NEXT?
WE BRACKET HER AS A TEAM, LEAPIN' LENA! I BODY-BLOCK HER HIGH...
...AND I HIT HER LOW, FLORID FLO!
GO!
YO!
HO! HO!
GOT HER--
GOT--?
}PURR: GOT YOURSELVES A HEAP OF THIN AIR!
WHOOF!
SQUUNCH
}MEOW!
OOF!
12

AND THEN--THE ALLEY-CAT BRAWL IS ON...
ZOOM
STEAM CABINET
H-S-SSSSSS
PURR & YOU MICE STILL WANT TO PLAY? WELL, CAT'S-UP.. NOT AWAY!
TZUNG!
13

FIVE DOWN--AND THREE TO GO! TAKE OFF, MY BEAUTIES--YOU'LL MAKE A PURR-FECT THREE-POINT LANDING!
YIIIII!
EEEEEE!
OOOOOOH!
BRRRRR
ZIG-ZIG-
ZIG-
WHOA! WHOA!
CHUG-CHUG-CHUG!
PURR CONGRATULATIONS, GIRLS! YOUR COURSE HAS STARTED!

NINE DAYS LATER...
SO...? SOMEHOW BATMAN HAS GUESSED MY OBJECTIVE AND SWITCHED LODGINGS FOR THE NIZAM AND HIS PEARL!
GOTHAM GLOBE
NIZAM OF NEPAL ARRIVES TODAY!
BRUCE WAYNE TO BE HOST!
BATMAN AND ROBIN GUEST GUARDS!
QUICKLY, CATWOMAN DESCENDS TO HER CATACOMB-LAIR BENEATH THE SALON...
WELL, PURR, TWO CAN PLAY AT THAT CAT-AND-MOUSE GAME! ESPECIALLY, WHEN THE CATS OUTNUMBER THE MICE NINE-TO-TWO!
LET'S INSPECT OUR NEW FELINE FURIES, SLINKY!
AH-H, PURR, NOW WE FORM AN UNBEATABLE TEAM!
BUT WHAT'S IN IT FOR US?
BESIDES THE LOOT WE SPLIT, YOU HELP ME OUTWIT BATMAN-- I HELP YOU REVENGE YOURSELVES ON THE MEN WHO SENT YOU TO PRISON!
A BATTLE OF THE SEXES, EH? WHAT'S OUR FIRST OBJECTIVE?
SWITCHING ON HER TV MAGNA-MONITOR...
...THE OFFICIAL ENTOURAGE HAS JUST REACHED...
...WAYNE MANSION! WHERE BATMAN HOPES TO PREVENT ME FROM PURR-LOINING THE NIZAM'S PURR-ICELESS PEARL!
AH-H-- A MOST PALATIAL RESIDENCE, TUAN WAYNE! I ALREADY FEEL AT HOME!
THANK YOU, YOUR LORDSHIP! AS YOU CAN SEE, EXTRAORDINARY SECURITY MEASURES WILL ENSURE YOUR SAFE VISIT!
15


LATER, AFTER THE OFFICIAL WELCOMERS HAVE LEFT...
{YAWN} IT HAS BEEN A MOST AUSPICIOUS BEGINNING TO OUR TOUR OF YOUR FANTASTIC COUNTRY, TUAN WAYNE! BUT NOW, "WE" ARE TIRED...
UNDERSTANDABLY, SIR! YOU CAN REST ASSURED...OF AN ASSURED REST!

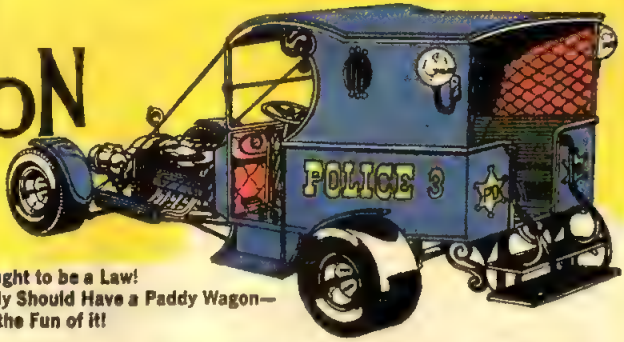

IN THE SHADOWS ACROSS FROM THE WAYNE ESTATE...
THE STAGE IS SET! THE NIZAM SLEEPS IN THE MASTER-BEDROOM--AND AS SOON AS ALL ARE ASLEEP...
...WE FELINE FURIES WILL PURR-PETRATE THE PURR-FECT CRIME!
16

How will even these PURR-FECT feline felons pierce the defenses of a police cordon and defeat the brilliant defensive wits of BATMAN and ROBIN?

PAWS NOW FOR TWO PAGES.

Paddy Wagon

The newest and grooviest FUN MACHINE in the Monogram exciting Rod and Drag model series!



There Ought to be a Law! Everybody Should Have a Paddy Wagon—Just for the Fun of it!

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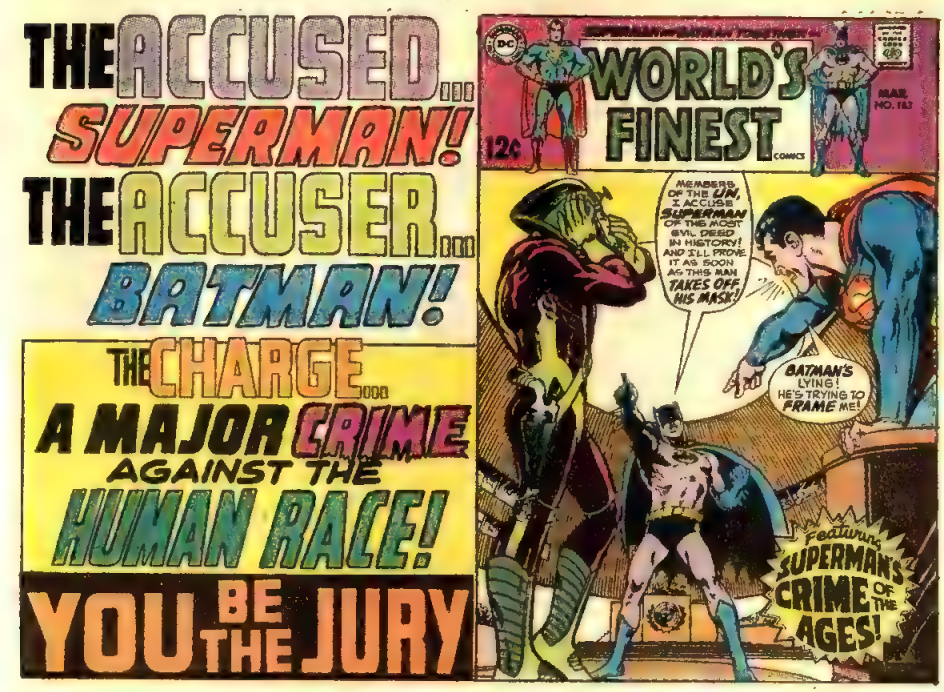
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BATMAN'S LYING! HE'S TRYING TO FRAME ME!
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LETTERS TO THE BATCAVE

Dear Editor:

Stupendous! — is the only word to describe Batman #206. It was, in my estimation, *the* greatest Batman story ever written. Perhaps the points I enjoyed most about "Batman Walks the Last Mile" were (1): the story took place for the most part at night, the proper setting for any Batman-and-Robin story; (2): Batman made a mistake! Panel 5, page 18, was terrific! He's human! (3): I saw a criminal go to the electric chair! This may seem rather morbid, but I am tired of seeing murderers simply getting a prison sentence. Some *do* go to the electric chair, and I was pleased to see that you brought out this point. Besides, if I were a citizen of Gotham City, I couldn't sleep at night knowing that the likes of Mr. Never were in Gotham Penitentiary with the "insecure" security at that place (recalling how many of Batman's arch-foes have managed to escape from that pen).

However, one thing disturbed me. After looking at the cover and reading the story, I wondered: Would DC ever stoop so low as to use one of your closest competitor's tricks by using a *misleading* cover? Here I pick up this comic mag expecting to see Batman in a perilous predicament—only to find it's a *criminal* in Batman-garb! Could DC ever commit such a grave sin against fandom? Then I realized your reason. At the end of the story, Mr. Never asked to die as Batman because he firmly believed that he *was* the Caped Crusader! Therefore, you were only respecting a dead man's last wish when you referred to him on the cover as Batman.

This story has my vote as the best story of the year!

— CAROLE-ANNE LOWE, Milford, Conn.

(After the many accusations of misleading covers leveled at us, what a pleasure to be complimented on a cover that at first sight figured to be grossly misleading, only to have it turn out in the story precisely the way as was cover-depicted! — Editor)

******

Dear Editor:

"Batman Walks the Last Mile" was an exceptionally entertaining script and my compliments to Frank Robbins, who apparently is diversifying his talents over an array of DC publications.

The Novick-Giella artwork was a winner all the way. The effect of the beautiful illustrations was highlighted by fine detail and good color combinations—colorful but not gaudy as can happen when operating on such a mode.

The *Planner* was a unique character in all respects, refreshingly so. One could not classify him as a thief, for clearly his intent was the demoralization and destruction of the Caped Crusader and his youthful counterpart. Even after reading the story I wasn't really sure what to formulate his accusation of "Batman brain" as. It's my guess the author planned this, intentionally leaving a void blanket of wonderment for the reader.

Actually, the story left several questions evident—but satisfy, if you will, the major one in my mind. Why did Never receive a death sentence? I'm no law expert but it seems I heard somewhere that only murder (not attempted) can draw such a verdict.

— RON JENNINGS, Coronado, Cal.

(Never was given the "hot seat" because the jury found him guilty of "premeditated murder" (that of Batman); the fact that the victim turned out to be "the Cat-Crook *. . . unarmed . . . gunned down in cold blood!" didn't negate the commission of "Murder One".* — Editor)

******

Dear Editor:

Congratulations! I'm glad to see that the number of puns spurted by Batman and Robin has at last gone down. There were only about four puns in all of Batman #206, and I hope this downward trend will continue.

It amazes me how Commissioner Gordon could believe the Planner's accusation against Batman, in spite of BM's apparent failure to solve crimes. In the beginning of the story, the commissioner is standing right there while Batman takes apart the clues to discover the criminal's identity. He sees B&R showing him the method Big Squat used to make it seem as if he hadn't left the stage. And what about all the other times the Caped Crusader solved crimes in front of Gordon? Surely he did not think Batman knew about the crime in advance? He knows better than that. I guess all we can say is that in the shock, being only human, the Commissioner forgot all of the previous things that Batman did. How often we forget some favors others did for us!

It's too bad that Planner was killed off. He could have teamed up with Johnny Witts and really have given the *Bat-Guy* an Excedrin headache. But at least you killed him in a good way. All criminals (well, most of 'em) are mentally disturbed in some way. Planner's shock at being caught in spite of his superb brain, wouldn't help any. Add to that the knowledge that his "brilliant" career will end by means of the "chair" soon . . . well, who wouldn't go off his rocker?

In closing, I would like to say that I hope we get more of Batman losing his cool. It makes him more human.

— JOE RUSNAK, Montville, N.J.

(If Batman is to lose his cool, *would it be all right if Commissioner Gordon were to get hot under the collar?* — Editor)

******

Dear Editor:

Oh, no!! Not Frank Robbins! After his disastrous job on the September ish, I thought I had wasted my 12¢ when I saw his name credited to "Batman Walks the Last Mile!"

He started out with a dull, boring beginning, the only good thing being Batman's outstanding deductive work, worked his way into an exciting and suspenseful time in Part 3. How Robbins can do that, I don't know. The story was great.

Well, Mr. Robbins cut down on the "hip talk" and gave us a truly dramatic yarn. That full-length scene on the final page knocked me out of my seat!

By the way, thanks for bringing back the EXTRA column. If I ever have anything to complain about, or anything really *great* to say, I'll write to it.

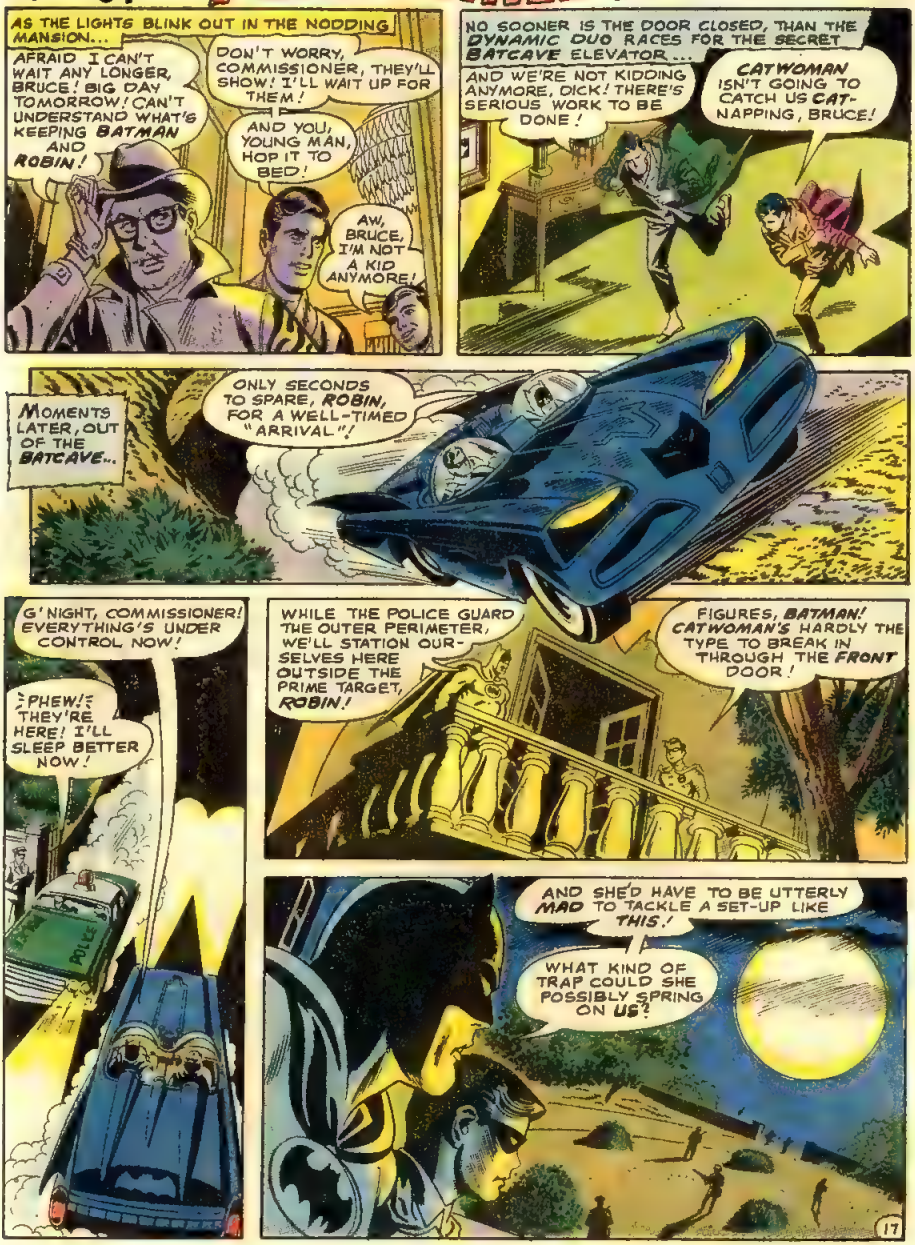
— STEVE GRABINSKY, Virginia Beach, Va.

(The EXTRA department will continue to appear whenever space and (editorial) time permit. There's an EXTRA in this issue — with Robbins monopolizing the discussion. It's recommended reading! — Editor)

******

Address communications to LETTERS TO THE BATCAVE, National Periodical Publications, 909 Third Ave., New York, N.Y., 10022.

"The Case of the PURR-LOINED Pearl!" PART 3


AS THE LIGHTS BLINK OUT IN THE NODDING MANSION...
AFRAID I CAN'T WAIT ANY LONGER, BRUCE! BIG DAY TOMORROW! CAN'T UNDERSTAND WHAT'S KEEPING BATMAN AND ROBIN!
DON'T WORRY, COMMISSIONER, THEY'LL SHOW! I'LL WAIT UP FOR THEM!
AND YOU, YOUNG MAN, HOP IT TO BED!
AW, BRUCE, I'M NOT A KID ANYMORE!
NO SOONER IS THE DOOR CLOSED, THAN THE DYNAMIC DUO RACES FOR THE SECRET BATCAVE ELEVATOR...
AND WE'RE NOT KIDDING ANYMORE, DICK! THERE'S SERIOUS WORK TO BE DONE!
CATWOMAN ISN'T GOING TO CATCH US CAT-NAPPING, BRUCE!
MOMENTS LATER, OUT OF THE BATCAVE...
ONLY SECONDS TO SPARE, ROBIN, FOR A WELL-TIMED "ARRIVAL"!
G'NIGHT, COMMISSIONER! EVERYTHING'S UNDER CONTROL NOW!
:PHEW!: THEY'RE HERE! I'LL SLEEP BETTER NOW!
POLICE
WHILE THE POLICE GUARD THE OUTER PERIMETER, WE'LL STATION OURSELVES HERE OUTSIDE THE PRIME TARGET, ROBIN!
FIGURES, BATMAN! CATWOMAN'S HARDLY THE TYPE TO BREAK IN THROUGH THE FRONT DOOR!
AND SHE'D HAVE TO BE UTTERLY MAD TO TACKLE A SET-UP LIKE THIS!
WHAT KIND OF TRAP COULD SHE POSSIBLY SPRING ON US?
17

AS IF ON CAT'S PAWS, THE CATILLAC SILENTLY SPEEDS AROUND THE ESTATE WALLS...
ON YOUR MARK, MY FELINE FURIES! WE'RE ABOUT TO SPRING OUR DIVERSIONARY SURPRISE ON THE UNSUSPECTING MICE!
AND THEN, THE ROOF SLIDES BACK INTO THE WAITING TRUNK COMPARTMENT...
READY... SET...
WHEN I THROW THE EJECTION-EJECT LEVER...
WITHOUT SLOWING DOWN, CAT-WOMAN UNLEASHES HER SECRET WEAPON AT DISCREET INTERVALS!
ZUNG!
...YOU GO OUT... ONE AT A TIME... HURLED BY MY CAT-APULT!
AS ONE OF THE FELINE FURIES TOPS THE WALL IN A DEATH-DEFYING LEAP...
CAT-WOMAN..?!
NAB HER!
SHE DARTS INTO THE FOLIAGE AS A SECOND FELINE FURY LANDS...
TAKE OVER, SULTRY SARAH!
MY PURR-LEASURE, TIMID TRIXIE! I DIG MEN TH' MOST!
QUICKLY WHIPPING OUT HER CAT-O-NINE TAILS...
TRIPPED..!
ZWT-T!
A SWITCH IN TIME SAVES NINE!
CONTINUED ON THE FOLLOWING...
10

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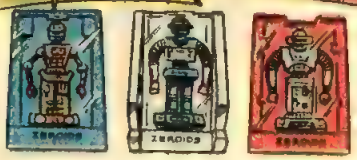
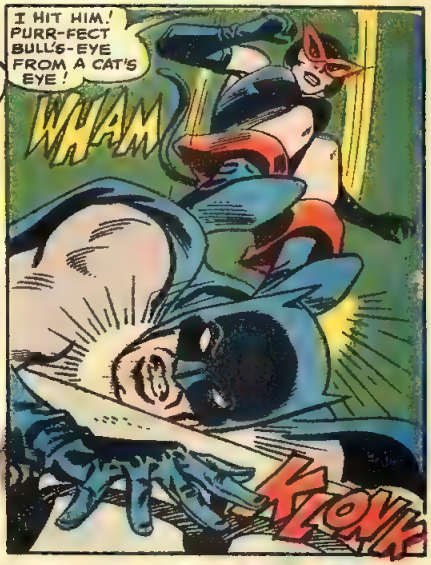
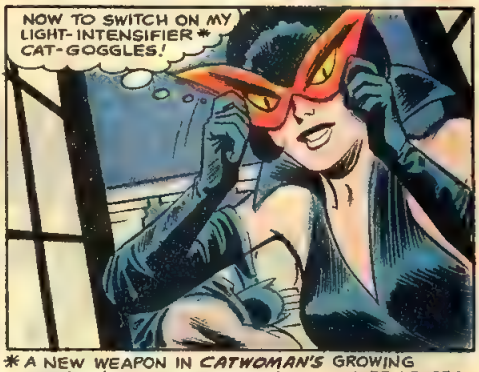


THE ZEROIDS™ BROUGHT TO EARTH BY IDEAL

AT ANOTHER SECTION OF THE WALL...
AND, AT YET ANOTHER SPOT...
STOP HER! IT'S CATWOMAN!
SHE GOT THROUGH! HOW--?
MUST BE ONE OF HER CAT-TRICKS, ROBIN!
I'D BETTER STAND GUARD HERE--SO YOU TAKE HER!
IS THIS THE REAL CATWOMAN--OR ONE OF HER FRAUDULENT FAKES?
YOU'VE SPRUNG ONE TRICK TOO MANY, MY FELINE FELON!
R-R-RROWR! SPTTT!
HA! WE DIDN'T THINK SO! FOR AROUND THE CORNER...
PURR! WITH SUCTION CUPS ON MY GLOVES AND BOOTS, BATMAN WILL NEVER KNOW...





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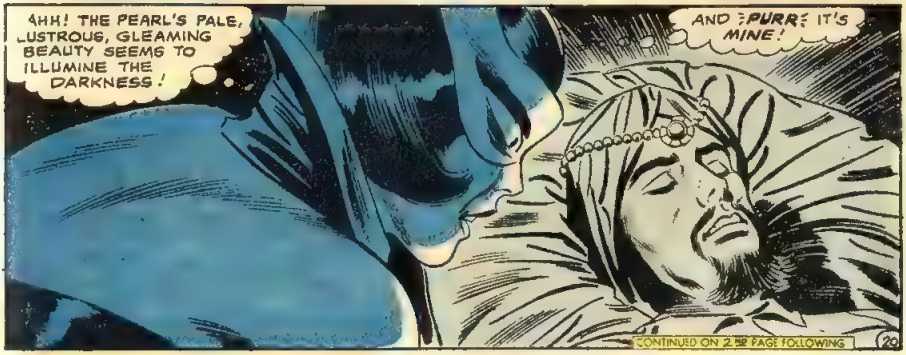

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- THE KNOT THAT UNTIES ITSELF
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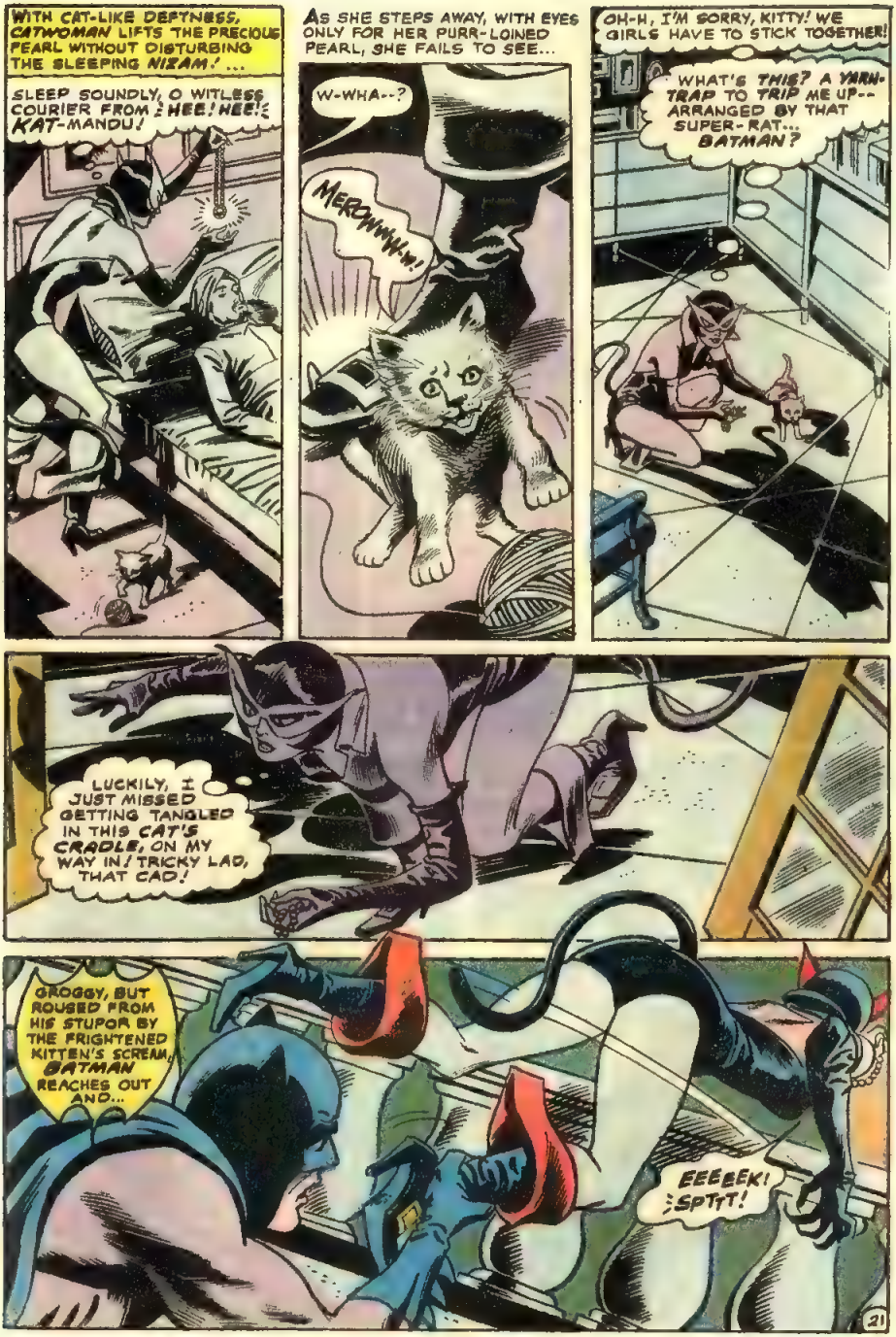
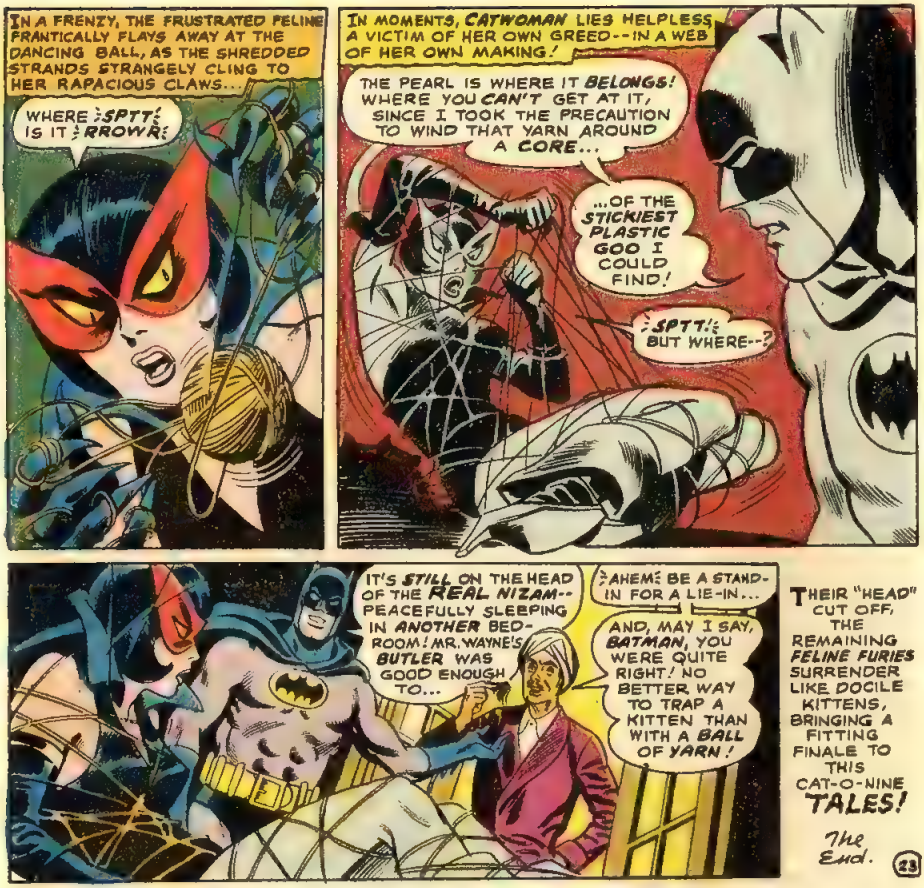
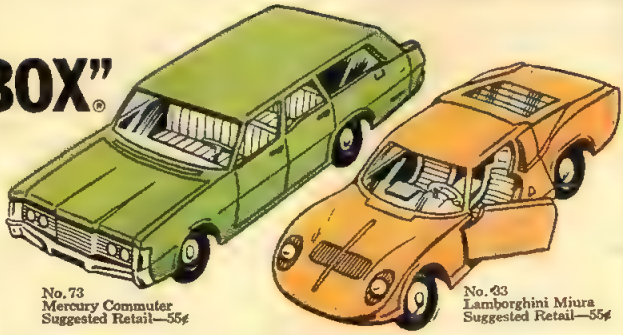

WITH CAT-LIKE DEFTNESS, CATWOMAN LIFTS THE PRECIOUS PEARL WITHOUT DISTURBING THE SLEEPING NIZAM! ...
SLEEP SOUNDLY, O WITLESS COURIER FROM KAT-MANDU! HEE! HEE!
AS SHE STEPS AWAY, WITH EYES ONLY FOR HER PURR-LOINED PEARL, SHE FAILS TO SEE...
W-WHA--?
MEROWWWW!
OH-H, I'M SORRY, KITTY! WE GIRLS HAVE TO STICK TOGETHER!
WHAT'S THIS? A YARN-TRAP TO TRIP ME UP-- ARRANGED BY THAT SUPER-RAT... BATMAN?
LUCKILY, I JUST MISSED GETTING TANGLED IN THIS CAT'S CRADLE, ON MY WAY IN! TRICKY LAD, THAT CAD!
GROGGY, BUT ROUSED FROM HIS STUPOR BY THE FRIGHTENED KITTEN'S SCREAM, BATMAN REACHES OUT AND...
EEEEEK! SPTTT!
21

WITH A FELINE SEVENTH SENSE, CATWOMAN BREAKS HER FALL WITH HER HANDS!
KRUNCH!
THE PURR-EARL?!
IT'S PHONEY! A PASTE REPLICA...!
PRECISELY!
YOU DIDN'T THINK I'D JUST LET YOU SLINK IN AND SLINK OUT--
YOU RAT-BAT! I'LL TEAR YOU INTO RIBBONS!
WHERE'S THE REAL PEARL?
WHERE YOU'D LEAST EXPECT IT!
WOUND INSIDE THAT INNOCENT BALL OF YARN!
YOU WANT IT? HERE--CATCH!
22


IN A FRENZY, THE FRUSTRATED FELINE FRANTICALLY FLAYS AWAY AT THE DANCING BALL, AS THE SHREDDED STRANDS STRANGELY CLING TO HER RAPACIOUS CLAWS...
WHERE :SPTT: IS IT :RROWR:
IN MOMENTS, CATWOMAN LIES HELPLESS A VICTIM OF HER OWN GREED--IN A WEB OF HER OWN MAKING!
THE PEARL IS WHERE IT BELONGS! WHERE YOU CAN'T GET AT IT, SINCE I TOOK THE PRECAUTION TO WIND THAT YARN AROUND A CORE...
...OF THE STICKIEST PLASTIC GOO I COULD FIND!
:SPTT:! BUT WHERE--?
IT'S STILL ON THE HEAD OF THE REAL NIZAM--PEACEFULLY SLEEPING IN ANOTHER BEDROOM! MR. WAYNE'S BUTLER WAS GOOD ENOUGH TO...
:AHEM: BE A STAND-IN FOR A LIE-IN...
AND, MAY I SAY, BATMAN, YOU WERE QUITE RIGHT! NO BETTER WAY TO TRAP A KITTEN THAN WITH A BALL OF YARN!
THEIR "HEAD" CUT OFF, THE REMAINING FELINE FURIES SURRENDER LIKE DOCILE KITTENS, BRINGING A FITTING FINALE TO THIS CAT-O-NINE TALES!
The End.
23

NEW "MATCHBOX"® MODELS OF THE MONTH.



No. 73
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LETTERS TO THE BATCAVE--EXTRA

Dear Editor:

Batman has long been my favorite comic mag character and very rarely do I have any major gripes about his handling. I wasn't overly fond of Gil Kane's interpretation of the *Caped Crusader* . . . but that soon departed. I protested the elimination of *Alfred* . . . but he's back. I disliked *Detective Patricia Powell* . . . but we've seen neither hide nor hair of the lady in lo these many years. So, I suppose the greatest gripe this reader has held against the name of *Batman* was the time I was almost hit by the *Batmobile* while walking by the 20th Century-Fox Studios. (Irony! I'd just purchased some of your competitor's comics and while waiting for the light to change, I'd decided to read all of the non-padded parts—finished with six seconds to spare!)

Thus, I am subtly leading up to my major gripe—*Frank Robbins.* Robbins is a good writer and DC was lucky to get hold of him. But whoever decided to put Robbins on *Batman* (and *Flash*) ought to turn in his *Superman of America* pin. A good character needs not only a good writer, but also the *right* writer. Robbins' writing isn't right — Robbins' writing reads rotten.

Batman is a creature of the night. You know that and I know that . . . but somebody forgot to take the message to Frank Robbins who seems to be interpreting the *Batman* character as a straight super-hero. To me, the name *Batman* means a fearless aid to law and order who prowls the streets of *Gotham City* and retains an aura of mystery . . . and aura which has been dwindling faster than Indians at a *Tomahawk-Ranger* meeting. This aura has been replaced by "personality" which is the worst substitution since *Star Trek* was pre-empted by some vintage Doris Day movie. This aura is a feeling which was present in *Batman* from his inception to around 1961 when much the same replacement was attempted and personified by *Batwoman, Bat-Mite, Bat-etc.* It returned briefly under the auspices of the *new look* but has faded as attempts have been made to replace it with a blatant "personality". In this case, it has amounted to making Bruce Wayne a semi-swinger.

I maintain that the *Batman* I know—the one originated 30 years ago—would never conform to a fad like the turtleneck sweater he was shown in, recently. Bruce is a mature adult and, for all intents, so's Dick Grayson. There is no need for pages to be spent on *Batman* himself—as Bruce Wayne or as *Batman* facing some crisis. The strongest element which *Batman* has going for him has always been plotting. Be it a rousing fight or a clever mystery, your staff has always been able to put a good story into 13 pages. With the new *Batman,* this can't be done.

The basis of most stories lately has been this personality development. *Batman* and *Robin* have "split up". *Batman* must prove his detecting skill to a doubting *Gotham City.* Bruce Wayne has gotten "married". *Batman* has been "arrested". What in the name of *Two-Face* is wrong with *Batman* fighting crime, once in a while? His greatest struggles lately have been of the man-versus-society variety.

The most personality development can come from the least amount of attempt. In order to be effective, personality development must be *subtle.* It seems that all too many comics readers (especially those who-patronize the competition) see subtle personality development as a *lack of any.* Maybe they read your comics too fast . . . but I should hope that would be no reason for you—who have produced the best in comics for over 20 years—to begin to cater to an audience who has to have the meaning of every element in your comics explained at great length. Novick-Brown-Giella are supplying you with the best *Batman* art in a long time. Let's have some appropriate stories to go with it.

I'm talking about murder mysteries and *Penguin-Joker* battles. I'm talking about the *Batmobile* speeding through *Gotham* at midnight and the dark figure of *Batman* slipping out to fell a robber band . . . then slipping away into the darkness. I'm talking about *Gothamites* looking at *Batman* . . . and wondering who he is . . . where he comes from . . . what he's really like. I'm urgently talking about putting suspense, mystery, and—most of all—plots into *Batman.* Get the "super-hero" out, and the "detective" in!

—MARK EVANIER, Los Angeles, Cal.

(If you were echoing the unanimous (or even majority) opinion on Robbins-a la Batman, *we'd be all shook up. But such is not the case, we're relieved to say—or rather as say the follow-up critics, typical of scores upon scores of those who have written in a similar favorable vein.* — Editor)

* * * .** *

Dear Editor:

Frank Robbins has given us some intriguing scripts in the latest four issues of *Batman* and *Detective.* He combines the most accurate touches of intrigue, mystery, and realism in his tales. Never before have I seen so many subplots and twists in *Batman* stories.

—BRADELY ANDERSON, Milwaukee, Wis.

Dear Editor:

I can't figure Frank Robbins out. First, he wrote a two-part story for *Flash* that was b-a-d. Then he did some *Batman* un-epics that were almost as bad. Then I read two new stories by him in the same week that are some of the best I've ever read: "Marital-Bliss Miss" (*Detective* 380) and "Batman Walks the Last Mile" (*Batman* 206). Now let's go for three in a row from Frank Robbins!

—STEVE CARLBERG, Shreveport, La.

* * * * * *

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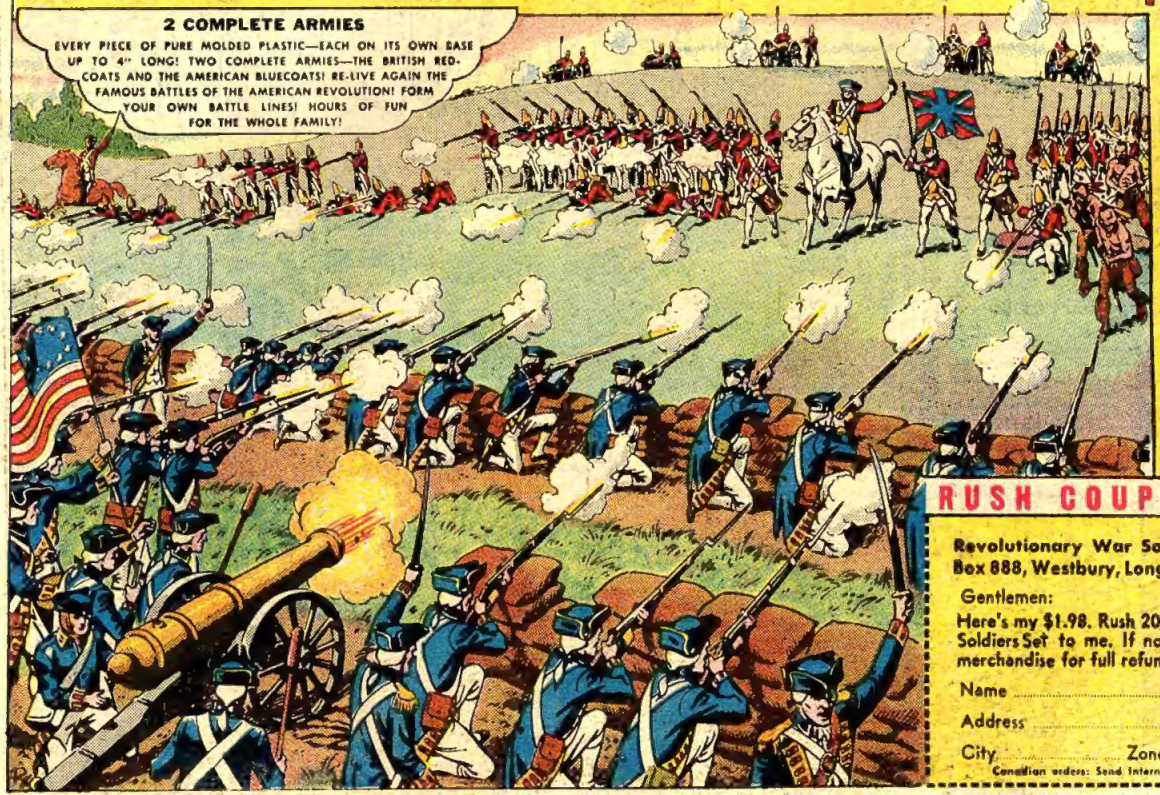

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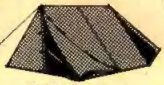
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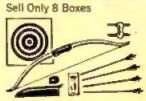
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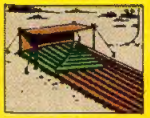
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